

**Progress Report**  
**on**  
**Protection and Legal Action against Women & Children**  
**Trafficking**

**For the period**  
**July 01 to December 31, 2000**

**Submitted to**  
**US Agency for International Development**

**Submitted by**  
**Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association**  
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**Dhaka**

# Progress Report

**Reporting Period: July 1 - December 31, 2000**

Project Title: Protection and Legal Action against Women & Children Trafficking

Cooperative Agreement No.: 388-A-00-00-00034-00.

Duration of the Reporting Period: 06 months (July 1 - December 31, 2000)

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## **Performance Report for the period July 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000**

### **Introduction/Justification/Summary**

#### **Introduction**

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA) implemented Protection and Legal Action Against Women and Child Trafficking program covering the period from July 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000 with the financial support of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). USAID made this grant in recognition of BNWLA's efforts towards providing protection and legal action support to women and children who have been victimized by trafficking through which basic human rights of women and children will be protected in Bangladesh.

#### **Objectives:**

Protection and Legal Action Against Women and Child Trafficking program focused its activities to achieve the following major objectives:

- ❖ Provide assistance to secure more arrests and prosecutions concerning trafficking;
- ❖ Operationalize the existing legal procedures on child/women trafficking to secure more arrests and prosecutions;
- ❖ Repatriate trafficked children and women from other countries;
- ❖ Rehabilitate the victims of trafficking through integration to family and employment.

#### **Justification**

Trafficking of women and children within the territory and outside Bangladesh is a common phenomenon. Uneducated and vulnerable women and children who are deprived of legal, social and financial support and opportunities easily become subjects of versatile exploitation and harassment. Poor and disadvantaged children and women are often trafficked from Bangladesh to India, Pakistan and the Middle East for various kinds of bonded labor such as camel jockeys, prostitution and sex slavery etc. The victims are either abducted or allured with promises of better life by providing lucrative job or marriage offers and false proposals to visit holy places. But practically they become victims of trafficking and embrace the lives of agony and torture.

Lack of education, poverty and overpopulation are the key factors for trafficking. Most of the victims are women, adolescent girls and minor boys. BNWLA felt that concerted efforts with comprehensive program of legal action against the traffickers, rescue, repatriation and rehabilitation of the victims of trafficking should be undertaken to combat trafficking. BNWLA initiated the program to effectively reduce the incidents of the trafficking in women and children in the country.

## Summary

**Set up ten focal sites to collect information regarding trafficking cases at district level:** Ten focal sites (mini-offices) have been set up and staffed with a full time Field officer at each site. A five-day orientation has been organized for the Field Officers. The Field Officers gathered extensive information based on which legal assistance have been provided to trafficked victims.

**Use district level information regarding trafficking cases to provide assistance to secure more arrests and prosecution:** The concerned Field Officers at different districts investigated 12 cases of trafficking and subsequently equal number of cases were filed with the assistance of BNWLA. Besides, information concerning the cases has been documented on regular basis for further investigation and action.

**Operationalize the existing legal procedures on child/women trafficking in an effort to secure more arrest and prosecution:** Information has been gathered about 86 cases related to trafficking from 10 focal sites under the project during the period under review. Two one day workshops were held at two focal points.

**Operationalize the steps required to repatriate children/women from other countries:** A total of 25 trafficked victims were repatriated from different countries during the period. The Field Officers at district level visited jails, police stations and courts to monitor the cases and prosecution of the trafficking cases. In addition, a total of 10 victims of internal trafficking were released under the project.

**Provide rehabilitation support to trafficking victims:** A total of five repatriated and or released victims of trafficking were provided with psychological and social support during the period. The rehabilitated residents are regularly monitored.

## Description of Activities

### **Result-1: Set up ten focal sites to collect information regarding trafficking cases at district level**

The project proposal envisaged conducting a number of events under this activity such as set up field offices and recruitment of Field Officers, developing of training module and organizing orientation workshop for Field Officers, carry out preliminary baseline survey, liaison with stakeholders, visit thana and court for monitoring, collect and verify information, assist victims in seeking legal assistance, assist panel lawyers in prosecuting offenders etc. during the reporting period.

***Recruitment of staff for head office:*** All the staff stipulated for the head office under the project were recruited through a proper process. Advertisement for recruitment was published in the newspaper in July 2000 and recruitment was completed between end July and mid August 2000.

***Set up offices and recruitment of staff:*** As per the project proposal 10 field offices at Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gopalganj, Lakshmipur, Cox's Bazar, Dinajpur, Lalmonirhat, Rajshahi, Satkhira and Jessore were set up and 10 Field Officers were recruited during the reporting period to conduct all field level activities under the project.

***Develop accounting system:*** According to the provision of the project an accounting system has been developed by a Chartered Accountant firm namely A. Qasem and Associates during the period. The consultancy firm prepared the draft of Accounting manual, Human Resource manual and Procurement manual by December 2000. The Accounts Department of the project is receiving support from the consultancy firm as and when necessary. Besides, a computerized accounting system has been developed and installed in the project computer.

***Develop training module and organize orientation workshop for Field officers:*** A training module was developed by a consultant to provide training to the incumbent Field Officers. Subsequently a five-day national level training workshop was organized from October 5 to 9, 2000 at the head office of BNWLA. The training workshop was organized aiming at making the Field Officers conversant with different aspects related to the issue of trafficking that are pertinent to the goals and objectives of the project. These include techniques of information gathering about victims, traffickers etc., process of taking legal action on behalf of the victims and various components related to the issue such as the process of lodging General Diary (GD), First Information Report (FIR). They were given orientation on basic laws and rules concerning the issue of trafficking, system of repatriation of trafficked children and women and their rehabilitation etc. The training also emphasized on the issue of office management, reporting and over all responsibilities of a Field Officer.

***Carry out preliminary baseline survey:*** According to the project proposal a preliminary baseline survey was scheduled to be conducted during the reporting period. In total four different types of questionnaire have been developed to conduct the survey at the focal sites. Information and data are being gathered

analyzing different cases of trafficking and through organizing workshops at the district level to determine the trend before starting the survey at the field level. The survey is expected to be conducted during March 2001.

***Liaison with stakeholders:*** The Field Officers maintained constant contact and liaison with different stakeholders including local journalist, representatives of the local elected bodies, local NGOs, community people and elicit necessary information concerning trafficking.

***Visit thana and court for monitoring and collect and verify information:*** The concerned Field Officers paid a total of nine visits to different thanas and courts to monitor trafficking related cases and maintained liaison with the members of the law enforcing agencies to gather detailed information about the cases. The Field Officers gathered information about 86 trafficking related cases through visiting the field and from other sources including local newspaper, journal etc.

***Assist victims in seeking legal assistance:*** Twelve victims received legal assistance throughout the country under the project during the reporting period. Of the total 12 cases four cases were lodged with different thanas (police station) which include Pallabi, Mohammadpur and Motijheel thana under Dhaka district. The rest nine were lodged with eight different thanas of nine districts including Sadar thana of Gopalganj, Kotwali thana of Dinajpur, Kotwali thana of Mymensingh, Avoyanagar thana of Jessore, Sadar thana of Chuadanga, Atowari thana of Panchagar, Sadar thana of Munshiganj, Sadar thana of Bogra and Boalia thana of Rajshahi district. A total of 10 trafficked victims related to these cases were rescued during the period. Besides, the Field Officers of the project provided assistance to eight panel lawyers with necessary information in prosecuting offenders of trafficking cases during the period under review.

***Identify specific high profile cases for further investigation:*** The project has identified one high profile trafficking case that was lodged with Motijheel thana in the month of October 2000. One tiny boy Monirul Islam alias Monir (6) of village Ramchandrapur of Sujanagar thana under Pabna district was rescued by the police from the grip of traffickers while he was being trafficked to the Middle East for being used as a jockey by an organized trafficking gang. Later on with the initiative of BNWLA seven alleged traffickers were arrested. BNWLA brought Monir to its shelter home 'Proshanty-2'. He is currently waiting to be reintegrated to his family soon. The project will oversee the whole process of prosecution of the traffickers of the case.

***Discussion meeting with local journalist, local elected bodies, community people and educational institutions:*** The Field Officers had 50 discussion meeting with local journalist, local elected bodies, community people and educational institutions and elicited information about trafficking based on which cases were lodged and victims were rescued. (District wise breakdown is given in the table 3)

***Develop database:*** The project proposal envisaged developing a database on trafficking of women and children. Although it was not developed within the stipulated time frame but the process of developing the said database is going on and is expected to be completed soon. In addition, the project has already developed another database on violence against women and children with the

financial support from the core fund of BNWLA. The database is being regularly updated with latest information coming from all corners of the country on the issue.

***Develop monitoring format:*** As per the project proposal a monitoring format has been developed by the project staff that will be modified and upgraded throughout the project period to properly monitor and evaluate the activities of the project. Certain indicators have been fixed in the monitoring format keeping in view the objectives, activities and time frame of the project both for monitoring and evaluation.

***Field visit for monitoring:*** The concerned Project Coordinator visited different focal sites to monitor the activities of the project during the reporting period. The visited focal sites are Dhaka, Dinajpur, Lalmonirhat, Narayanganj and Rajshahi. Of these focal sites she visited Dinajpur and Lalmonirhat twice.

**Result-2: To use district level information regarding trafficking cases to provide assistance to secure more arrests and prosecutions**

***Investigate the cases of child and women trafficking:*** The Field Officers of the project investigated a number of cases based on the information gathered by visiting field, other sources such as local newspaper, magazine, journal etc. and by visiting brothel, jail and police station. Of the investigated cases the project picked up 12 and proceeded for necessary legal and other actions during the period.

***Liaison with law enforcing authorities and public prosecutor:*** The project's staff both at national and district level maintained constant liaison and communication with the concerned members of the law enforcing agencies including police, BDR and public prosecutors to collect information and follow up the advancement of the cases.

***Assist filing cases:*** A total of 12 cases of trafficking of women and children were filed with different police stations under different districts in the country with the assistance of the project during the reporting period.

***Detect irregularities in the legal procedure and initiative to eliminate those:*** The concerned Field Officers and Investigator of the project detected several irregularities in the legal procedure and also found some irregularities intentionally conducted by the members of the law enforcing agencies. For instance trafficking cases are often transformed into passport act related cases which resulted in acquitting the traffickers from the cases of trafficking. The project staff detected at least five such incidents three from Jessore and two from Satkhira district during the project period. The concerned staff members of the project with the assistance of the panel lawyers protested these sorts of irregularities adopted by law enforcing agencies. Besides, the project through organizing workshops at district level is creating awareness among journalists, lawyers, members of the law enforcing agencies and the civil society to build a potential safeguard against these irregularities.



***Mobilize the stakeholders for necessary action:*** BNWLA maintained regular communication and liaison with different stakeholders including members of the law enforcing agencies, ATSEC members and like minded organizations and also creating awareness through organizing various programs to mobilize their support to take necessary action in connection with trafficking. The district level staff are also maintaining liaison with local level stakeholders to mobilize them against trafficking.

***Monitor the legal procedure:*** The Field Officers in association with the Panel Lawyers monitored the legal procedure of the cases of trafficking and assisted the concerned Public Prosecutor in obstructing the traffickers from getting bails. They also monitored whether the police prepared the charge sheet properly etc.

***Document the information regarding the cases:*** The Investigator and Field Officers of the project gathered detailed information about the cases investigated and filed under the project. The information was properly documented by the Information Specialist regularly based on which follow up actions concerning the cases are being taken.

### **Result-3: Operationalize the existing legal procedures on child/women trafficking in an effort to secure more arrests and prosecutions**

***Collect and analyze information related to reporting, arrest and prosecution procedures at district level:*** The staff members of the project collected detailed information regarding the cases of trafficking of women and children and analyzed the collected information to proceed for taking legal action against the traffickers. Based on the information collected by the staff of the project a total of 20 alleged traffickers were arrested in connection with 12 trafficking cases.

***Organize one day workshop at 10 focal sites:*** Two one day workshops were organized at Cox's Bazar on December 9 and Narayanganj on 13, 2000. A total of 30 and 31 participants representing journalists, lawyers, local government officials, law enforcing agencies and civil society participated the workshops at Cox's Bazar and Narayanganj respectively. The workshop emphasizes on the causes, target and strategies of trafficking. The issues of collection area, route, departure and consequence of the victims of trafficking were also discussed in the workshop. It highlights the role and responsibilities of government, law enforcing agencies and community leaders in protecting trafficking. Application of trafficking related laws, prosecution system, problems and limitations and role of CEDAW/CRC etc. are also discussed in the workshop. Both the workshops were widely covered by the local newspapers of the respective district and BTV. Although as per project proposal 10 workshops were supposed to be organized during the period it was not possible due to delay in commencement of the project. The remaining workshops are expected to be organized along with the stipulated 10 workshops during the next six months of the project period.

**Result-4: Operationalize the steps required to repatriate children/women from other countries**

***Identify persons who need to be repatriated:*** The project identified a total of 25 trafficked victims who was needed to be repatriated and accordingly repatriated all of them from India during the reporting period.

***Carry out preliminary investigation and contact guardians for authorization:*** Preliminary investigations were carried out by the Investigator and the Field Officers on all the 25 cases and gathered necessary information that helped expedite their repatriation process. The concerned project staff also contacted guardians of the victims and collected authorization for repatriation and rehabilitation.

***Approval from Home Ministry and contact relevant organizations abroad:*** The project maintained constant liaison and communication and lobbied with the Ministry of Home Affairs received their approval that was mandatory for repatriating these 25 victims. Besides, BNWLA contacted its partner organizations in India and Bangladeshi High Commission there and received their assistance in smooth repatriation of the said 25 persons.

***Visit brothels, jails and police stations to identify the victims of internal trafficking and release them:*** The Field Officers of the project visited brothels, jails and police stations and identified 10 victims of internal trafficking and subsequently took necessary measures with the help of the Panel Lawyers of the project to release them from captivity during the period under review.

**Result-5: Provide rehabilitation support to trafficking victims**

***Provide psychological and social support to the repatriated/released trafficked victims and their families:*** Both the repatriated trafficked victims and other members of their families usually become demoralized. At that time they need strong psychological and social support. Accordingly the project provided psychological and social support to all the 25 repatriated victims through counseling by the Counselors of BNWLA. These supports were necessary for the victims as well as their families to gain mental strength to go for legal action against the culprits at the one hand and think about their rehabilitation on the other. The counselors also monitored the facilities of repatriated inmates staying in the shelter home of the organization. The project rehabilitated five trafficked victims during the reporting period.

***Establish relationship with other organizations:*** In some cases the victims of trafficking are rehabilitated through reintegration to their families. And some want to be rehabilitated through getting job. In order to rehabilitate the repatriated and released victims through linkage to employment BNWLA established and strengthened relationship with some of the big NGOs such as BRAC, Proshika, ASA, Red Barnet partners, ATSEC network member etc. These big organizations can provide employment opportunity to the repatriated trafficked victims. It is expected that a substantial number of victims will be rehabilitated through these organizations by the end of this project.

**Result-6: Dialogue workshop in collaboration with other organizations**

*Dialogue meeting with law enforcing agency, lawyer, BDR and representative from local NGOs on child and women trafficking:* The project did not organize the aforementioned dialogue meeting during the reporting period although it was stipulated. The project wanted to gather information and elicit recommendations and suggestions from different professional groups through organizing workshops at the district level before organizing the dialogue meeting to make them the basis of the said meeting. It is expected that the dialogue meeting with law enforcing agency, lawyer, BDR and representative from local NGOs on child and women trafficking will be organized very soon.

**Table-1: Cases filed under the project during the reporting period.**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Name of thana (P.S)</b>	<b>Case no.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No. of victims</b>	<b>No. of Accused</b>
1.	Dhaka	Pallabi	15	7.11.00	2	2
2.	Dhaka	Mohammadpur	713	10.11.00	19	7
3.	Dhaka	Motijheel	101	27.10.00	1	6
4.	Gopalganj	Sadar	26	25.12.00	1	2
5.	Dinajpur	Kotwali	43/548	18.7.00	1	2
6.	Mymensingh	Sadar	1078	19.12.00	1	1
7.	Jessore	Avoydnagar	11	21.05.00	9	2
8.	Chuadanga	Sadar	4	9.11.00	1	12
9.	Panchagar	Atowari	13/74	16.9.00	1	4
10.	Munshiganj	Sadar	27/202	27.8.00	2	2
11.	Bogra	Sadar	88	23.8.00	1	6
12.	Rajshahi	Boalia	33/504	28.11.00	1	3

**Table - 2: Progress Report - July to December 2000**

SL #	Activities	Achieve up to Dec 2K
1	Develop Training Module for orientation of the field officer	1
2	Organized orientation workshop for field officer	1
3	Carry out preliminary baseline survey	-
4	Visit thana and court for monitoring	35
5	Assist the Panel Lawyers in prosecuting offenders	5
6	Arrange group discussion meeting with local journalist, local elected bodies, community people, educational institutes	50
7	Develop monitoring format	1
8	Assist in filing cases	12
9	Develop user-friendly operational Manual for different groups e,g, lawyer, law enforcing agencies, NGOs and other concerned officials/persons dealing with trafficking issues	-
10	Organize one day training workshop for district level	2
11	Organize National Workshop with legal and human rights advocates and GOB officials	-
12	Prepare report of national workshop	-
13	File writ petition / PIL / class action suit	-
14	Provide Psychological and social support to the repatriated / released trafficked victims and their families	25
15	Repatriate children / women from other countries/Internally	25/10
16	Provide rehabilitation counseling support to trafficking victims	5
17	Develop a database on trafficking	

**Table - 3: Progress Report - July to December 2000**

SL	Activities	Dhk	Ng	Gpl	Lkp	Cox's	Djp	Lal	Cpy	Stk	Jsr	Total
<b>1</b>	<b>Information Collection</b>											
1.1	Number of victims' detail Information collected	20	03	-	07	04	04	03	-	04	38	83
1.2	Collect other information regarding trafficking either visiting the places or from other sources / media (local news paper, journal etc.)	16	10	-	04	03	12	06	-	04	31	86
<b>2</b>	<b>Legal Assistance</b>											
2.1	Number victims identified to provide legal assistance	03	02	-	-	-	02	-	-	-	05	12
2.2	Number of victims provided legal support	01	-	-	-	-	02	-	-	-	05	08
2.3	Number of case filed											12
2.4	Number of victim repatriated from other country											25
2.5	Number of victim released from brothel/safe custody											10
2.6	Number of victim rehabilitated											13
2.7	Number of traffickers arrested											20
<b>3</b>	<b>Liaison</b>											
3.1	Visit Police Station & Court for monitoring of trafficking	8	6	-	2	3	4	3	1	4	4	35
3.2	Visit NGOs and make liaison to collect more information about trafficking.	05	26	-	07	-	13	09	-	09	13	82
3.3	Visit Community people, elected bodies, BDR, etc. to collect information and get assistance about our activities.	44	35	-	09	-	11	21	-	29	59	208
<b>4</b>	<b>Fact and Finding</b>											
4.1	Number of investigation and verification of incident	16	04	-	-	03	03	03	-	-	05	34
4.2	Follow-up / reinvestigation of case / incident	06	02	-	-	03	-	-	-	-	04	15

*Note: Dhk - Dhaka, NG - Narayanganj, Gpl - Gopalganj, Lkp - Lakshmipur, Cox's - Cox's Bazar Djp - Dinajpur, Lal - Lalmonirhat, Cpy - Chapai Nawabganj, Stk - Satkhira, Jsir - Jessore*

Activities of BNWLA Since 1991 - 2000

Rescue : 499

Repatriation : 223

Rehabilitation : 191

Release : 414